

**Salt Lake Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management**



**Pony Express Plan Amendment  
Salt Lake City, Utah**

**Decision Record  
Environmental Assessment No. UT-020-996-36**

**Location:** Tooele County, Utah

**Project Type:** Program planning for 14,254 acres, including 8,291 acres of acquired lands

**Date of Decision:** November, 1997

**Field Office Contact:** Mike Nelson, Realty Specialist, 801-977-4355  
Alice Stephenson, Planning Specialist, 801-977-4317

## Decision Record Sheet

**Pony Express Resource Management Plan  
Salt Lake District  
Bureau of Land Management**

We have reviewed and approved for implementation the proposed decisions of the Pony Express Resource Management Plan Amendment. The specific details of the decisions are included in the Decision Record which follows,

|                       |                 |                     |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| <u>Margaret Wyatt</u> | <u>11/24/97</u> | <u>Area Manager</u> |
| Margaret Wyatt        | Date            | Title               |

|                           |                 |                         |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Glenn A. Carpenter</u> | <u>11/24/97</u> | <u>District Manager</u> |
| Glenn A. Carpenter        | Date            | Title                   |

|                        |                |                       |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| <u>G. William Lamb</u> | <u>12/9/97</u> | <u>State Director</u> |
| G. William Lamb        | Date           | Title                 |

**ACTING**

# **PONY EXPRESS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

## **DECISION RECORD EA 020-94-007**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this action is to amend the Pony Express Resource Management Plan (RMP) to provide for management guidance, decisions and allocations in the North Oquirrh Management Area (NOMA) in Tooele County. This amendment makes decisions for each resource program on 14,254 surface acres and 10,613 subsurface acres within the NOMA. These figures include 8,291 acres of acquired lands. The amendment will also correct deficiencies in the Pony Express RMP that no longer accommodate the numerous changes that have taken place since 1990.

Consideration of resource values for special designations, such as wilderness, was deferred for future review. The acquired lands would be evaluated under Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

### **Alternatives Analyzed**

Three Alternatives were analyzed in the EA - (1) No Action, which precludes new planning decisions for these acquired lands and further use authorizations would not be allowed, (2) Proposed Action, which provides a balance between resource development and resource protection, and (3) Resource Development, which emphasizes resource development and protects other resources to the extent required by laws and regulations.

### **Public Involvement**

The public was involved in the development of this plan. Their participation is listed in EA #020-94-07, Chapter V. The public was notified of their right to protest the proposed plan through the Federal Register, news releases and letters. The protest period ended on August 23, 1997. No protests were received. The State of Utah reviewed the proposed plan through the Resource Development Coordinating Committee and found that the proposed actions are not inconsistent with any state plans, programs or policies.

Summaries of the major decisions of the amendment are as follows. For ease in tracking with the Pony Express RMP, existing decisions are identified in italics prior to the new amendment decision.

## LANDS PROGRAM

### *DECISION 1 - PERMP*

### *DISPOSAL*

The following lands have been identified for all forms of disposal:

- 1) T. 3 S., R. 4 W.,  
Section 12: S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$  5.00 Acres
- 2) T. 2 S., R. 4 W.,  
Section 13: Lots 2-5 2.75 Acres

### *DECISION 2 - PERMP*

### *RETENTION*

All other lands in the North Oquirrh Management Area other than those parcels mentioned in *Decisions 1 and 3* will be retained in public ownership and will not be considered further for disposal unless overwhelming need or high value resources not previously identified or considered can be gained

### *DECISION 3 - PERMP*

### *EXCHANGE*

*The following parcels of land will be considered for disposal by exchange:*

- 1) T. 2 S., R. 4 W.,  
Section 11: All lands north of RR Grade 40.00 Acres
- 2) T. 3 S., R. 4 W.,  
Section 11: All public lands 224.70 Acres

*The following areas will be available for exchange proposals within the North Oquirrh Management Area only:*

- 1) T. 2 S., R. 4 W.,  
Section 11: All public lands east and south  
of UPRR grade: 126.22 Acres  
Section 12: W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ , NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ : 400.00 Acres

### *DECISION 3 - PERMP LAND TENURE ADJUSTMENT CRITERIA*

*The following land tenure adjustment (LTA) criteria will replace the language in Decision 3 and be used to create additional LTA opportunities throughout the Pony Express Resource Area, including lands within or adjacent to the NOMA.*

1. Land tenure adjustments would be considered where such adjustments are in the public interest and accommodate the needs of local and State government, including needs for the economy, community growth and expansion and are in accordance with other land exchange goals and objectives and RMP planning decisions;

2. The land tenure adjustment results in a net gain of important and manageable resource values on public lands such as crucial wildlife habitat, significant cultural sites, high quality riparian areas, live water, Threatened & Endangered Species habitat, or areas key to the maintenance of productive ecosystems;
3. The land tenure adjustment ensures the accessibility of public lands in areas where access is needed and cannot otherwise be obtained;
4. The land tenure adjustment is essential to allow effective management of public lands in areas where consolidation of ownership is necessary to meet resource management objectives; and
5. The land tenure adjustment results in acquisition of lands which serve a national priority as identified in national policy directives.

All disposals would be subject to existing laws, regulations, policies, and valid existing rights; some of which may preclude disposal. Further, all disposals would be subject to site specific environmental analysis when an actual land exchange proposal is initiated.

#### *DECISION 5 - PERMP*

#### *WITHDRAWALS*

No withdrawals will be made on any lands within the NOMA.

#### *DECISION 6 - PERMP*

#### *ACQUISITIONS*

**Within the North Oquirrh Management Area:** All private lands within the exterior boundaries of the NOMA will be considered suitable for acquisition by exchange. First priority will be given to lands adjacent to existing public lands and to lands above the 5,200 foot elevation. Any and all lands acquired within the exterior boundary of the North Oquirrh Management area will be managed in accordance with the planning decisions contained in this amendment.

**Outside the North Oquirrh Management Area:** Management of all land acquisitions since the effective date of the Pony Express RMP and future land acquisitions will be in accordance with existing land use management prescriptions described in the existing Pony Express Resource Management Plan and any subsequent amendments. Should some resource conditions or value be identified where existing management decisions are found unsuitable, then additional plan amendments may be required to provide for appropriate management of those parcels.

#### *DECISION 7 - PERMP*

#### *ACCESS*

To enhance public access, BLM will pursue opportunities to acquire access to the Bates Canyon area as shown on Map 3. In order to allow for efficient management, opportunities to acquire administrative access to Pole Canyon will be pursued.

## **TRANSPORTATION & UTILITY CORRIDORS**

### **DECISION 1 - PERMP**

### **RIGHTS-OF-WAY**

Rights-of-Way applications within the NOMA will be considered on a case by case basis, however, rights-of-way would avoid the following areas;

- 1) lands within VRM Class II areas,
- 2) lands above 5,200' elevation,
- 3) lands with slopes greater than 30%,
- 4) lands within ¼ mile of live water sources, except water development projects where underground placement and wildlife mitigation would reduce impacts to acceptable levels.

Preference would be given to underground construction methods that can be fully mitigated by proper reclamation and rehabilitation. Rights-of-way proposed for areas above the 5,200 foot elevation mark must be constructed underground and must be completely rehabilitated. A bond is required for all projects above the 5,200 foot elevation line. Existing rights-of-way above the 5,200 foot elevation line would not be considered for renewal unless they can be reconstructed underground with complete rehabilitation.

## **RANGE PROGRAM**

### **DECISION 1 - PERMP**

### **FORAGE ALLOCATION**

Grazing will continue to be authorized, pending application of Utah Standards & Guidelines and other range studies to determine stocking rates, for the Big Canyon and the Pole Canyon pastures (see Map 4) at the current rate of 125 head of cattle from June 16 through October 15 (a total of 250 AUMs on 50% Federal range). Livestock will be excluded from the area above the 5,200 foot elevation on public land prior to August 15 of any one year to protect important watershed vegetation. The Pass Canyon pasture will be rested from grazing while monitoring studies are undertaken to evaluate the proper carrying capacity and determine the stocking rates of this pasture. Suitability determinations will be made on all pastures for final stocking rate determinations.

An activity plan would be implemented as time and budget warrants. The activity plan would emphasize rotation and rest from grazing to allow for perennial vegetation to increase, enhancing watershed and winter habitats for deer and elk.

*Authorization of additions or reductions of AUMs for the North Oquirrh Allotment will be dependant upon the completion of proposed rehabilitation projects, monitoring restrictions and application of suitability criteria.*

*Change of livestock class can be considered if determined to be consistent with other existing goals and objectives of the area. Allocation of temporary non renewable AUMs will be considered on lands proposed for disposal.*

Provide the following forage allocations for wildlife;

Mule deer: 1,224 AUMs (conversion factor 8.9/AUM winter and 5.8/AUM in summer)

Elk: 571 AUMs (conversion factor 2.1/AUM)

Allow vegetation modification projects that will enhance wildlife values so long as other resource goals and objectives are met.

The following types of projects would be constructed as necessary to maintain or enhance resource values or provide for the enhanced management of livestock or wildlife;

**Fencing:** Pass Canyon pasture fence, (enhance livestock distribution to accomplish better forage utilization); approximately 2.0 miles.

Middle Pasture fence, (enhance livestock distribution to accomplish better forage utilization); approximately 1.0 miles.

North Pasture Fence, (enhance livestock distribution to accomplish better forage utilization); approximately 2.0 miles .

All fences will be constructed in accordance with BLM manuals to reduce wildlife injury and mortality.

**Gates:** Drift fences with gates would be constructed as necessary for the protection of resources. Gates will be placed at the mouths of Bates, Pass, Pole, and Flood Canyons to facilitate existing livestock management practices. .

**Water:** In general, water development projects would be constructed to enhance livestock and wildlife management and are consistent with other resource goals/objectives and decisions in existing planning documents.

Other similar projects may also be constructed as identified in activity or site specific planning.

## **VEGETATION MODIFICATION PROGRAM**

This is a new program not currently in the Pony Express RMP.

### **DECISION 1**

### **VEGETATIVE MODIFICATION**

Various types of land/vegetation modification methods including but not limited to, disking, rangeland drills, chainings and reseeding, herbicides, hand tools etc., would be utilized if such projects would assure progression towards proper functioning condition of the land, including reduction in erosion or sedimentation rates, increases in appropriate or desired vegetative species composition, reduction in noxious weeds, enhancement of livestock management, or improve wildlife habitat or visual resources. The specific type of treatment would depend upon an analysis of any given location.

Specific vegetation enhancement projects that would be conducted by various methods addressed in this proposed amendment (except chaining) include the following areas;

- approximately 800+ acres below the 5,200 foot elevation line (generally located below the Pass Canyon area),
- approximately 300+acres below the 5,200 foot elevation line (generally located below the Big Canyon area

All watershed or vegetation projects will require a minimum of 2 years rest from livestock grazing after completion of the project. Monitoring will be conducted to determine if longer resting periods are needed. Commercial or personal use of woodland products would not be allowed within the NOMA unless site specific need is demonstrated, it is consistent to or complimentary with planning goals and objectives, and is analyzed in a subsequent environmental analysis.

## **DECISION 2                      HYBRID OAK PROTECTION**

The following mitigation will be required for any surface disturbing activity that could adversely affect hybrid oak stands, unless it is shown to the satisfaction of the authorized officer, that such effects could be mitigated.

- Hybrid oak clones would be preserved and shall not be damaged or removed by any permitted use.
- Individual clones that are in danger will be fenced to protect them from damage.
- A Plan of Operations and bonding will be required for any project that will take place closer than 100 feet to an oak clone in this OHV closed area.

## **SOIL, WATER, and AIR PROGRAM**

### ***DECISION 4 - PERMP***

### ***EROSION CONTROL***

Construct erosion control projects wherever necessary to reduce existing erosion and dust problems or enhance watershed condition according to site specific needs. Specific methods to be considered are inclusive of those identified for vegetation projects but also include the following; appropriate road capping, crowning, reclamation/rehabilitation of problem access areas, water bars, rip rap, culverts and water control structures. In addition to these goals and objectives, the following projects and methods would be analyzed for the control of erosion:

- Redesign main Pass Canyon Road on bench areas (2.0 miles) using realignment, grading, graveling/crowning, water bars, and appropriate drainage methods.
- Close the following trails known to cause excessive erosion, maintenance and/or safety problems; Pass Canyon jeep trail, Big Canyon jeep trail, Big Spring jeep trail, Murray Canyon jeep trail as well as other small trails resulting form indiscriminate use. Administrative or permitted uses would continue to be allowed



## *DECISION 2- PERMP*

## *WATER RIGHTS*

Pursue water rights as necessary or as opportunity arises to provide benefits for livestock, wildlife or public values.

## **WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES PROGRAM**

### *DECISION 4 - PERMP*

### *CRUCIAL HABITAT*

BLM will protect important wildlife habitat values throughout the NOMA from disturbing activities by restricting seismic work, mineral and well development, new road construction, rights-of-way, organized recreational activities, military exercises, and other disturbing activities (excluding maintenance activities) in the following areas during the stated times;

- 1) within mule deer winter range December 1 to April 15, (8,374 acres)
- 2) within 0.5 mile of active raptor nest sites March 1 to July 15 of each year or year long if the disturbance would negatively impact the suitability of the site for future nesting,
- 3) within 0.5 mile of sage grouse strutting grounds (leks) and crucial sage grouse nesting habitat between March 15 and June 15 each year and within winter crucial habitat areas December 1 through March 1,
- 4) within 1,200 feet of riparian habitats,
- 5) within crucial mule deer summer/fawning habitats April 15 to July 31, (663 acres).
- 6) within crucial elk winter range December 1 to April 30 and calving areas May 1 to June 30. (10,178 acres)
- 7) within waterfowl habitat, i.e.; marsh and wetland areas,
- 8) within .5 mile of bald eagle roost sites between November 15 and March 15.

Specific exceptions may be granted by BLM if the proposed activity will not seriously disturb the wildlife habitat values being protected.

### *DECISION 10 - PERMP*

### *REINTRODUCTION OF UPLAND GAME BIRDS*

Allow future transplants of Rio Grande Turkeys in coordination with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

## **RECREATION MANAGEMENT**

### *DECISION 1 - PERMP*

### *RECREATION AREAS*

The lands within the North Oquirrh Management Area are designated as an Extensive Resource Management Area (ERMA). The goal of this ERMA will be to provide for dispersed, unregulated and unconfined recreation experiences with minimal oversight or supervision consistent with the existing primitive/non-motorized and semi primitive/motorized physical setting that now exists in the North Oquirrh Management Area.

- **Recreational Developments:** Consistent with the existing physical setting of the area, no additional recreational facilities will be constructed in the ERMA.
- **Trails & Signs;** No new trails will be constructed within the NOMA. Additional signing will be allowed in order to provide for visitor safety or protect natural resources where such conditions may be found.

#### *DECISION 2 - PERMP*

#### *OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLES*

To manage for visitor use, control erosion, and avoid disturbance to wildlife, the NOMA will receive the following OHV designations.

##### Open to Motorized Vehicles only on Designated Roads and Trails:

All lands below (west) of line shown on Map 7. This line is intended to generally represent the boundary between lands with slope above 20% (18 degrees) from those below, except for canyon bottoms. Approximate acreage: 1,809 acres.

##### Closed to all Motorized Vehicles all year:

All lands above (east) of the above described line. Approximate acreage is 12,445 acres.

**EXCEPTIONS:** Motorized access on designated roads and trails on the Pass Canyon Bench as shown on Map 7 will be limited to the period between June 1 and October 31 in order to protect crucial wildlife habitat and prevent erosion damage to soils. If conditions permit, this open period may be extended by the BLM Authorized Officer to include the period through December 5th. Long-term goals for OHV use would be to improve access conditions to allow all weather travel on designated roads from June 1 to December 5th each year.

The jeep trail in Bates Canyon will remain open on a trial basis. Should damage to watershed or other resource values occur as a result of access into Bates Canyon, the Authorized Officer would immediately close this access to all motorized vehicles.

In all cases, administrative, fire protection, search and rescue, or any other authorized use would be allowed.

**Other:** Snowmobile use is prohibited in all crucial deer and elk winter range except that administrative or permitted users would still be allowed (i.e., search and rescue, etc.)

### **MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

#### *DECISION 1 - PERMP*

#### *MATERIAL SALES*

No material sales sites will be considered in the North Oquirrh Management Area.

### *DECISION 5 - PERMP*

### *LOCATABLE MINERALS*

The area will remain open to locatable minerals; however, mining activities will require a plan of operations and bonding prior to mining operations and closed to OHV areas.

### *DECISION 3 - PERMP*

### *LEASABLE MINERALS*

The lands within the North Oquirrh Management Area will be categorized for oil and gas resources as follows (see Map 8):

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Category I: Open to oil and gas leasing, no special lease restrictions:      | 40 acres     |
| Category II: Open to oil and gas leasing subject special lease restrictions: | 10,573 acres |
| Category III: No surface occupancy:  | 0 acres      |
| Category IV: Closed:   | 0 acres      |

## **CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAM**

### *DECISION 2 - PERMP*

### *MANAGEMENT CATEGORIES*

As time and budget allow, or need arises continue to conduct cultural resource inventory on a site or area wide basis. Data gathered would be used to classify similar classes of sites or areas into management categories. The following management objectives will be used:

**Manage for information potential:** Cultural resources under this objective are capable of contributing useful scientific, historic or management information. Information potential on these sites or areas is to be protected by physical or administrative means until information potential has been realized. Mitigation to avoid adverse impacts is allowed on sites within this category.

**Manage for Public Values:** Cultural resource included under this objective possess identified sociocultural, educational recreational or other public values. These sites or areas would be managed in a manner that considers the values. Mitigation to avoid adverse impacts is allowed on sites within this category.

**Manage for Conservation Use:** Cultural resources included under this objective have overriding scientific or historic importance. These sites or areas are to managed in a manner that maintains their present condition and scientific potential. Conflicting uses would not be allowed if it is determined that these sites or areas would be impacted.

Important sites may be protected through fencing, avoidance or increased surveillance. Mitigation of sites in responses to surface disturbing activities is allowed when authorized by the Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Stabilization or interpretation of important sites may also be allowed when authorized by SHPO.

At a minimum, all surface disturbing activities will be required to maintain at least a 200 foot buffer from any National Register site.

## **VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### *DECISION 1 - PERMP*

### *DESIGNATIONS*

The lands within the North Oquirrh Management Area are classified as depicted on map 9.

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| • VRM Class I   | 0 acres      |
| • VRM Class II  | 12,445 acres |
| • VRM Class III | 1,544 acres  |
| • VRM Class IV  | 265 acres    |

## **FIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

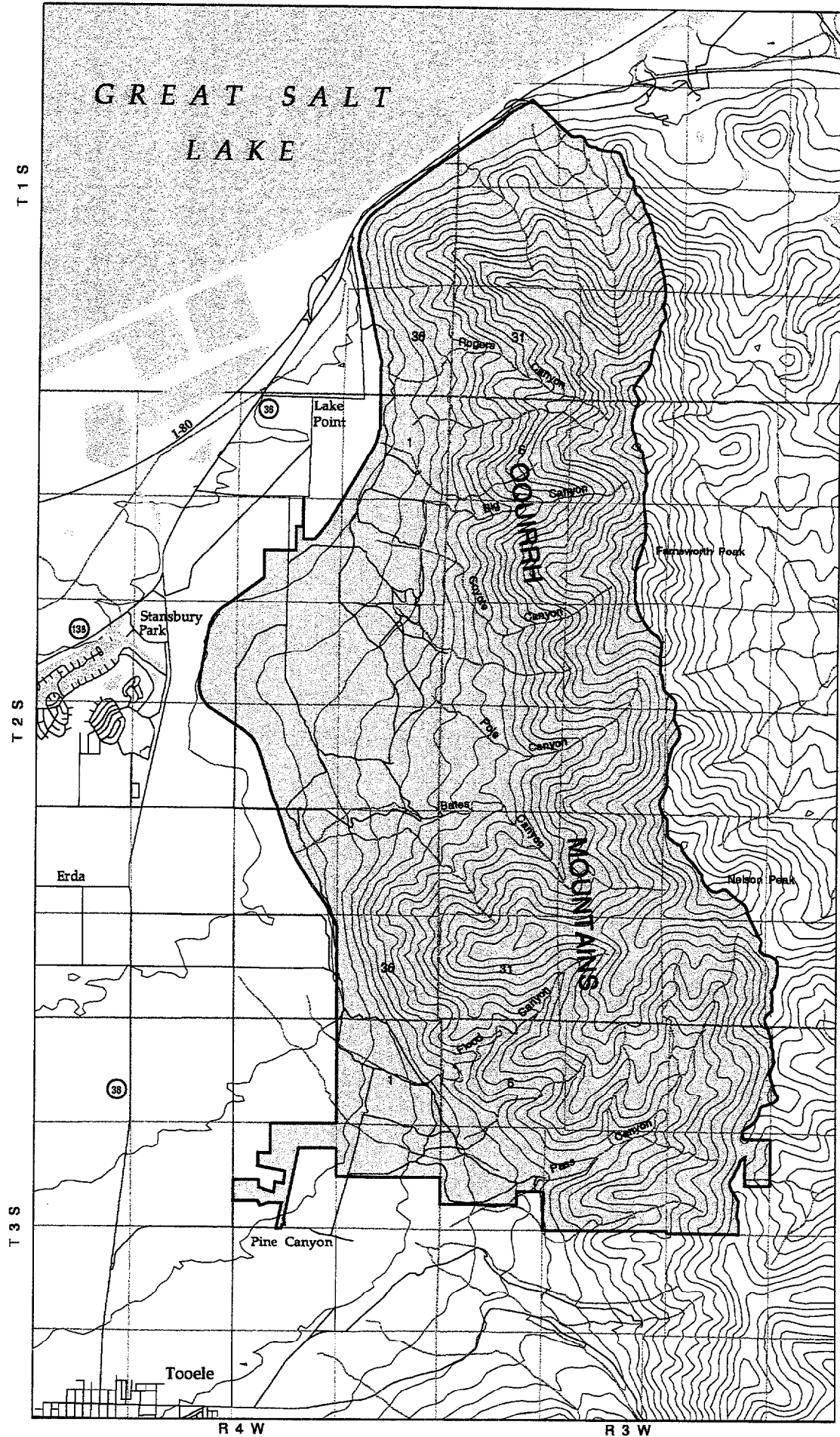
### *DECISION 1 - PERMP*

### *FIRE SUPPRESSION*

The State of Utah and Tooele County will continue to provide for initial attack and fire suppression in accordance with existing agreements. Due to the developing urban interface and the significant communication sites, aggressive fire suppression tactics will be used to contain 90% of fires in the NOMA to 300 acres or less.

Fire suppression signs will be placed at main entrance points.

MAP 1 GENERAL LOCATION

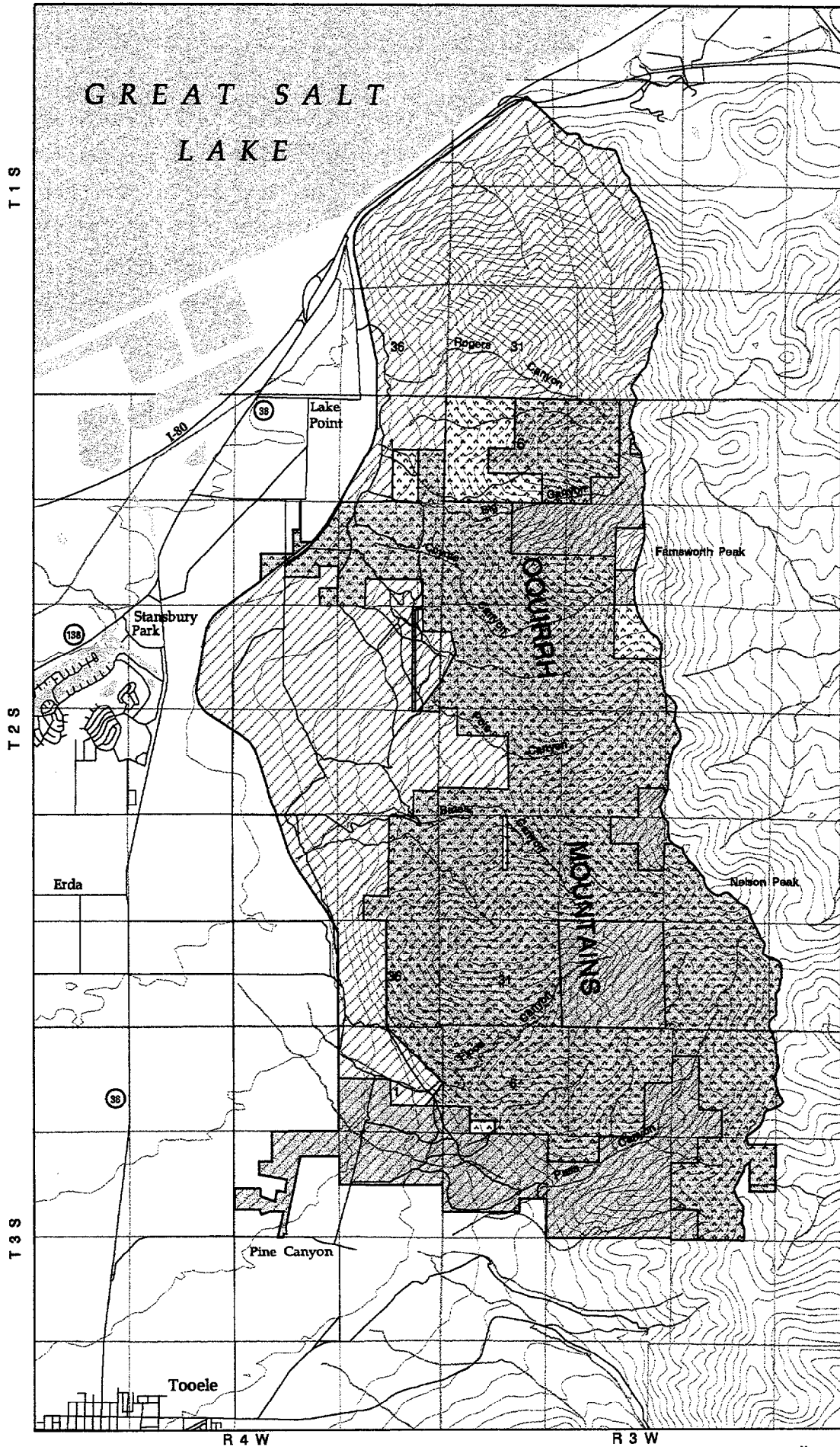


North Oquirrh Management Area

1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000

# MAP 2 LAND OWNERSHIP

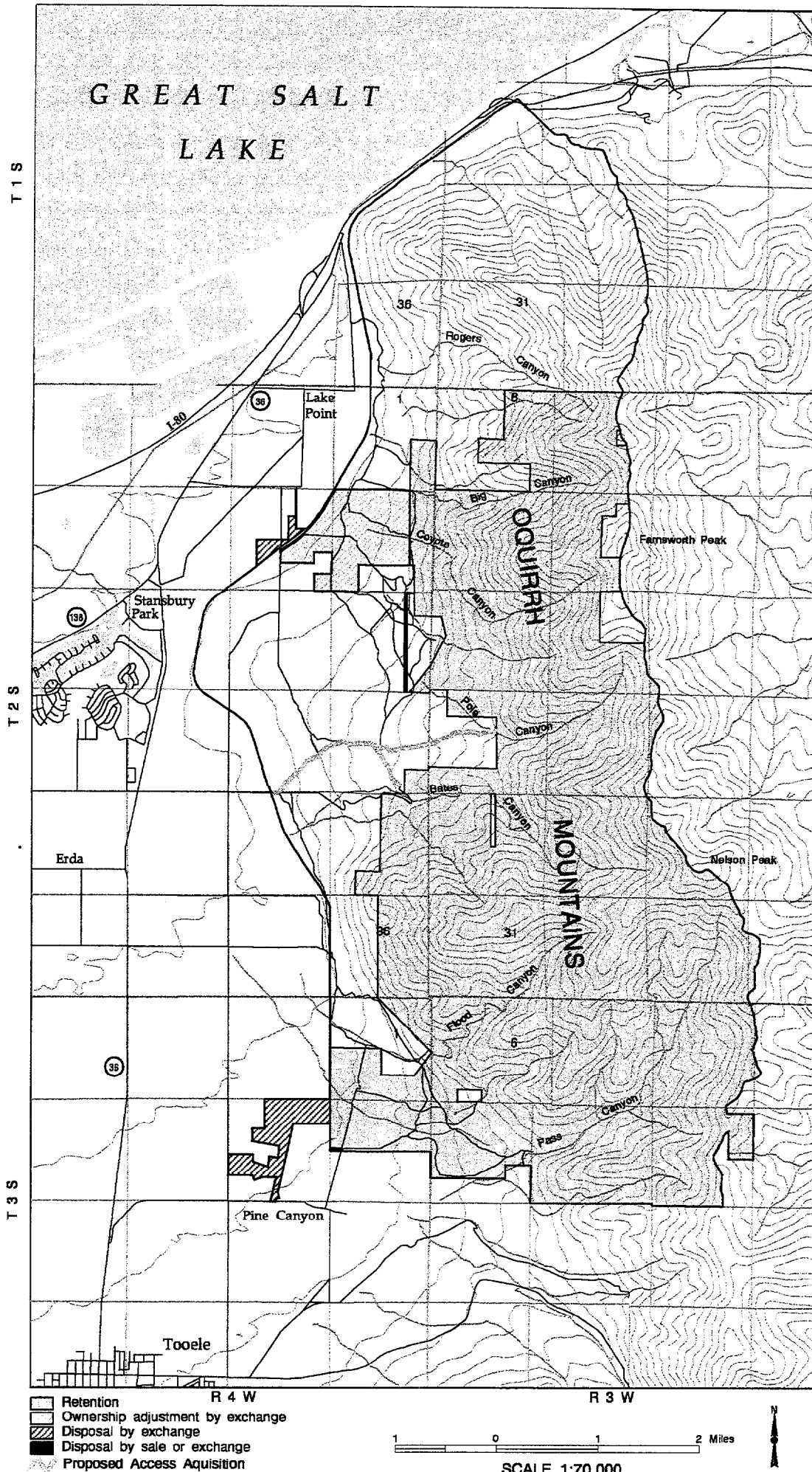


Surface  
 Public  
 Private  
 Mineral  
 Public  
 Private

1 0 1 2 Miles

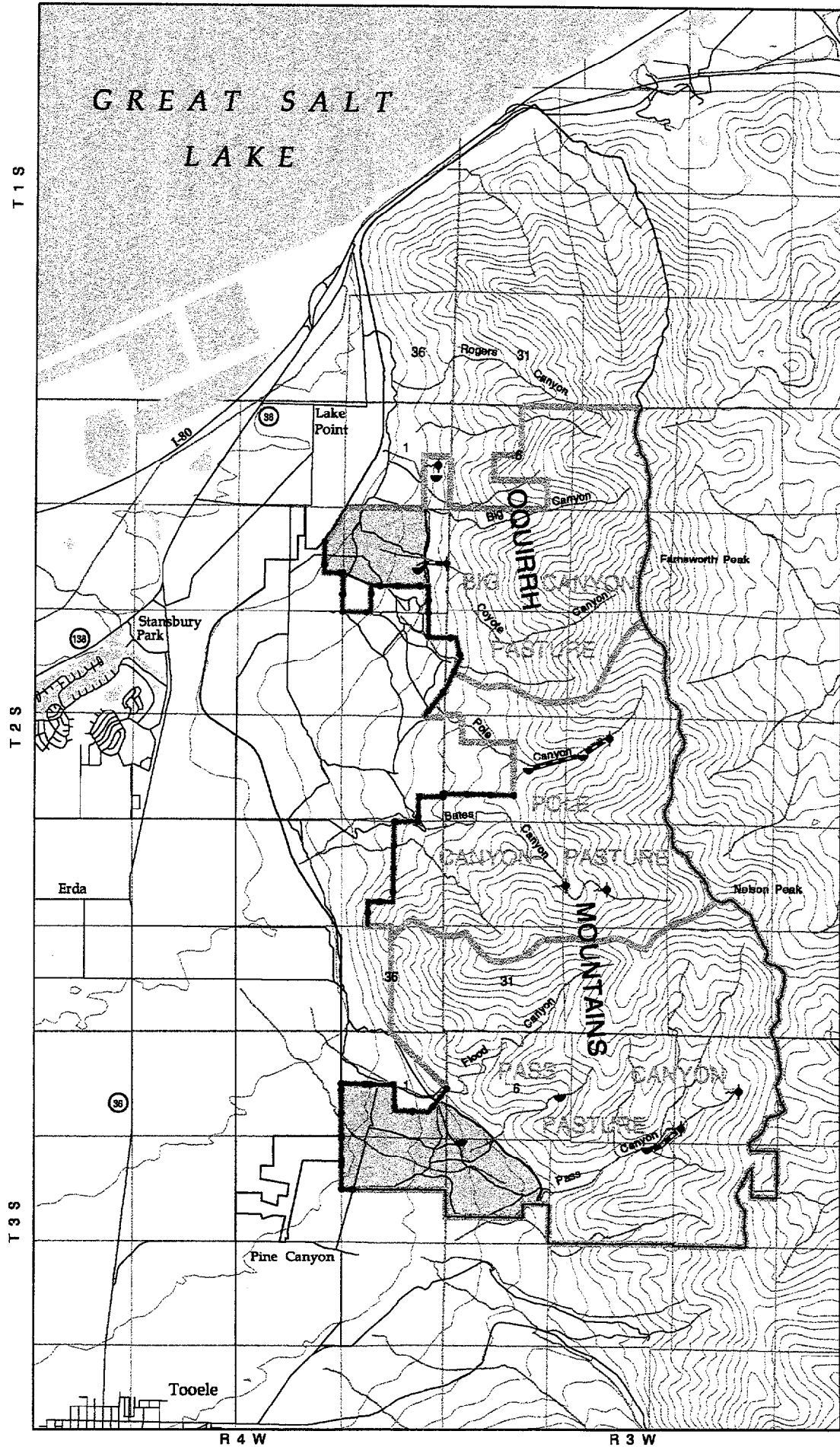
SCALE 1:70,000

MAP 3 LAND TENURE  
Alternative 2





MAP 4 WATERSHED AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT  
Alternative 2



Pasture Boundary  
 Proposed Pipeline  
 Proposed Fence

Proposed Land Treatment  
 Springs  
 Proposed Trough

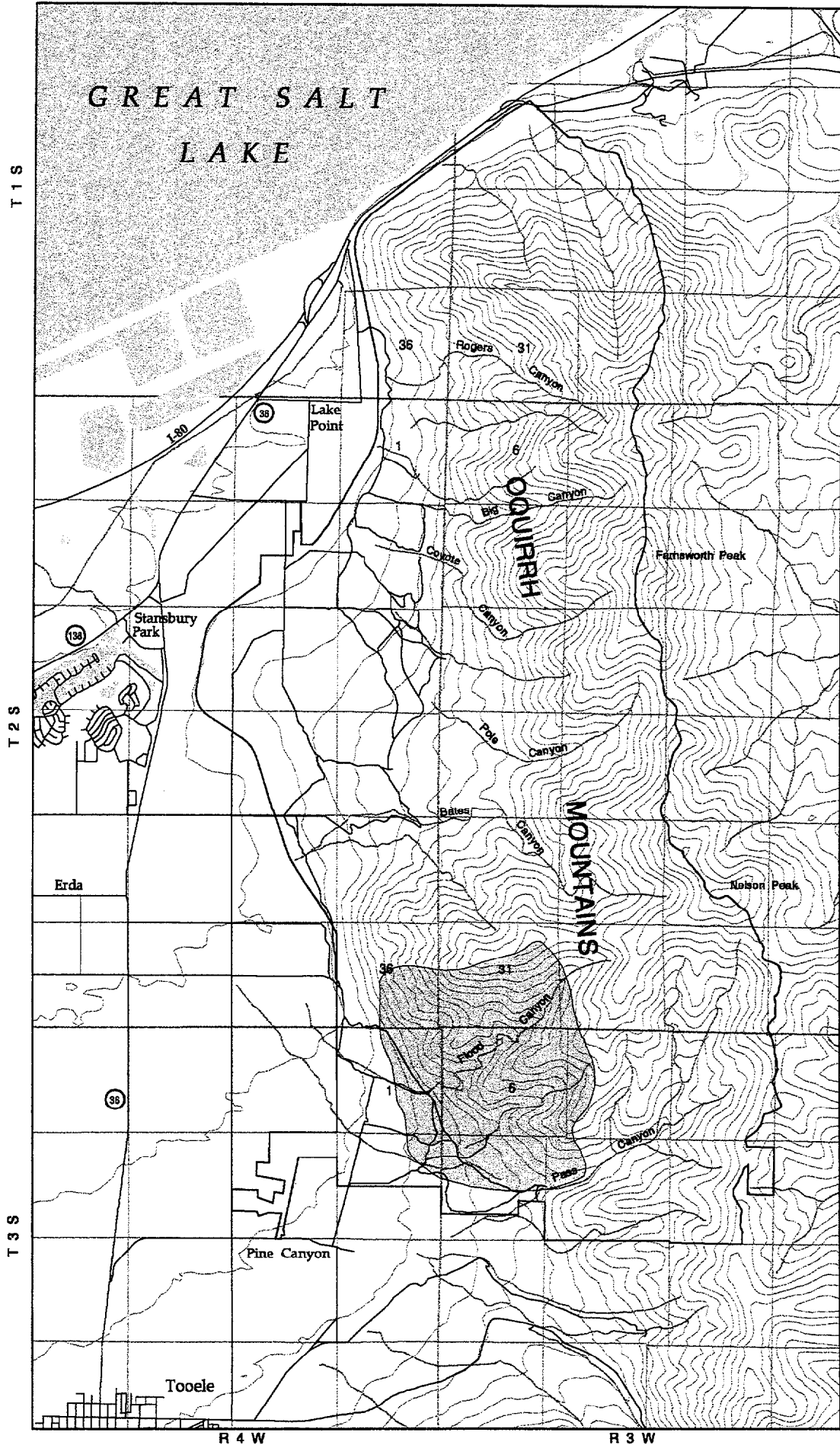
0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000





MAP 4A HYBRID OAK  
Alternative 2

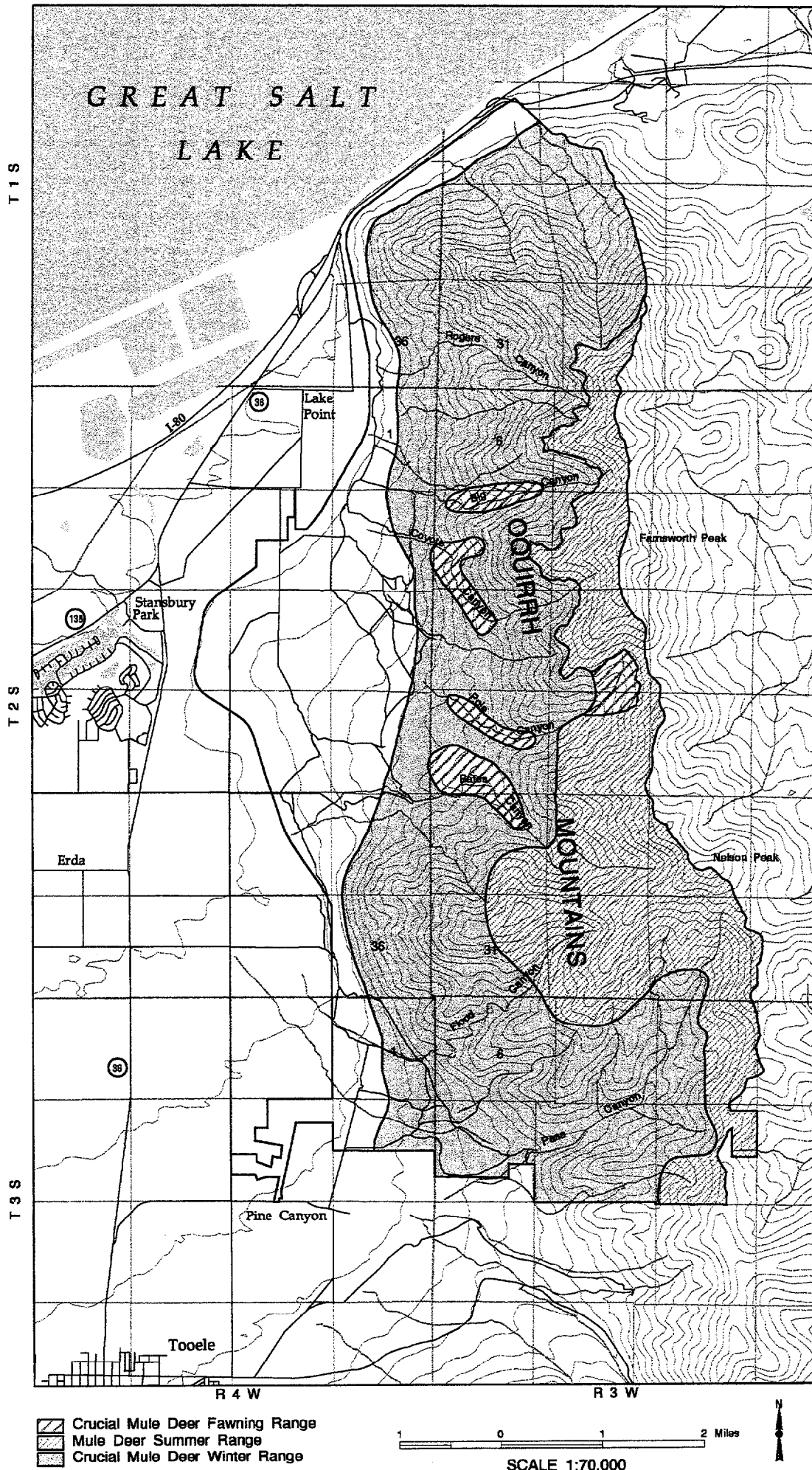


Hybrid Oak Area

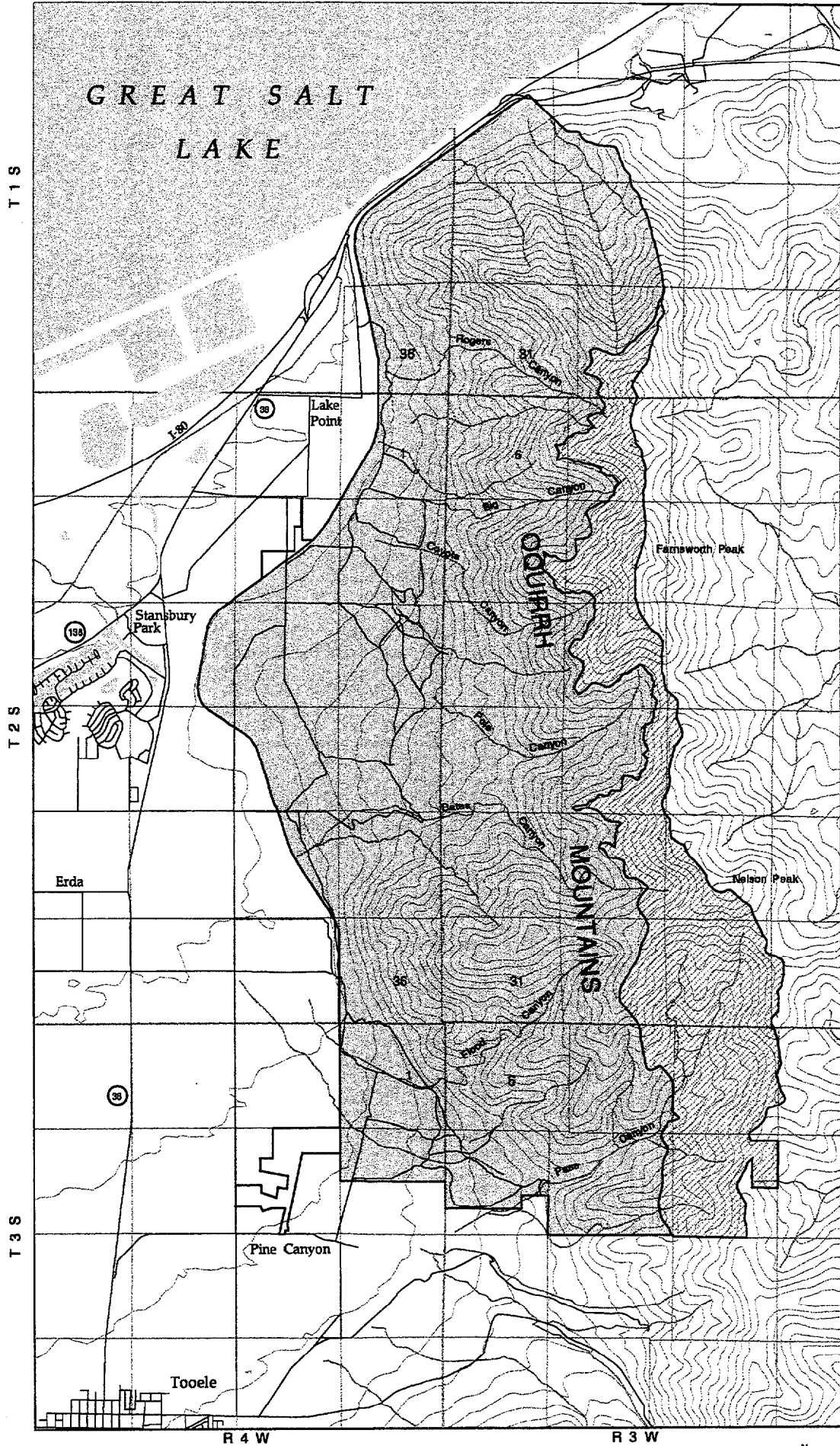
1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000

MAP 5 MULE DEER HABITAT  
Alternative 2



MAP 6 ELK HABITAT  
Alternative 2

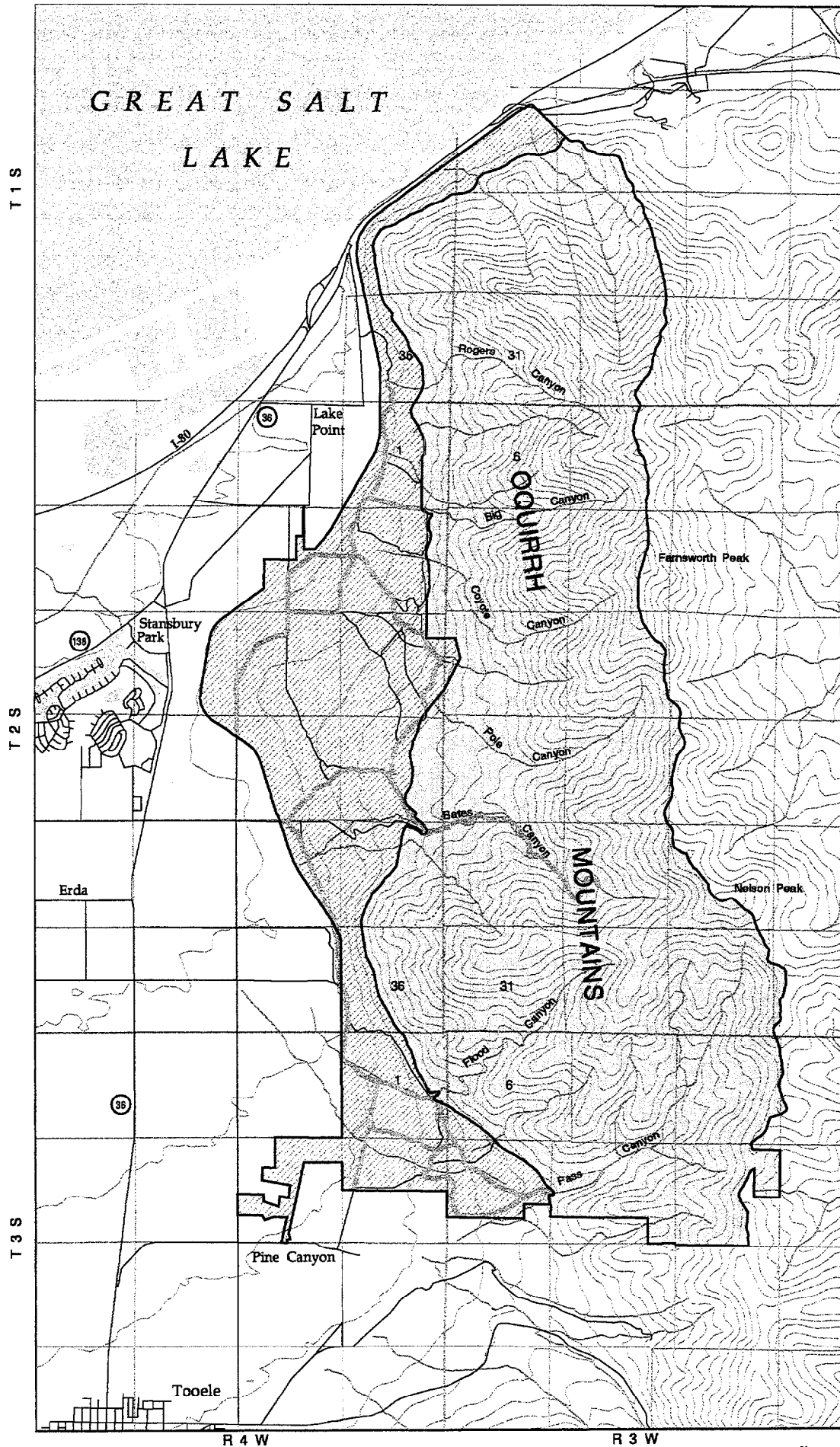


Crucial Elk Calving Range  
Crucial Elk Winter Range

1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000

MAP 7 OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLE USE  
Alternative 2



- Closed to OHV Use
- OHV Limited to Designated Roads and Trails
- Designated Roads and Trails

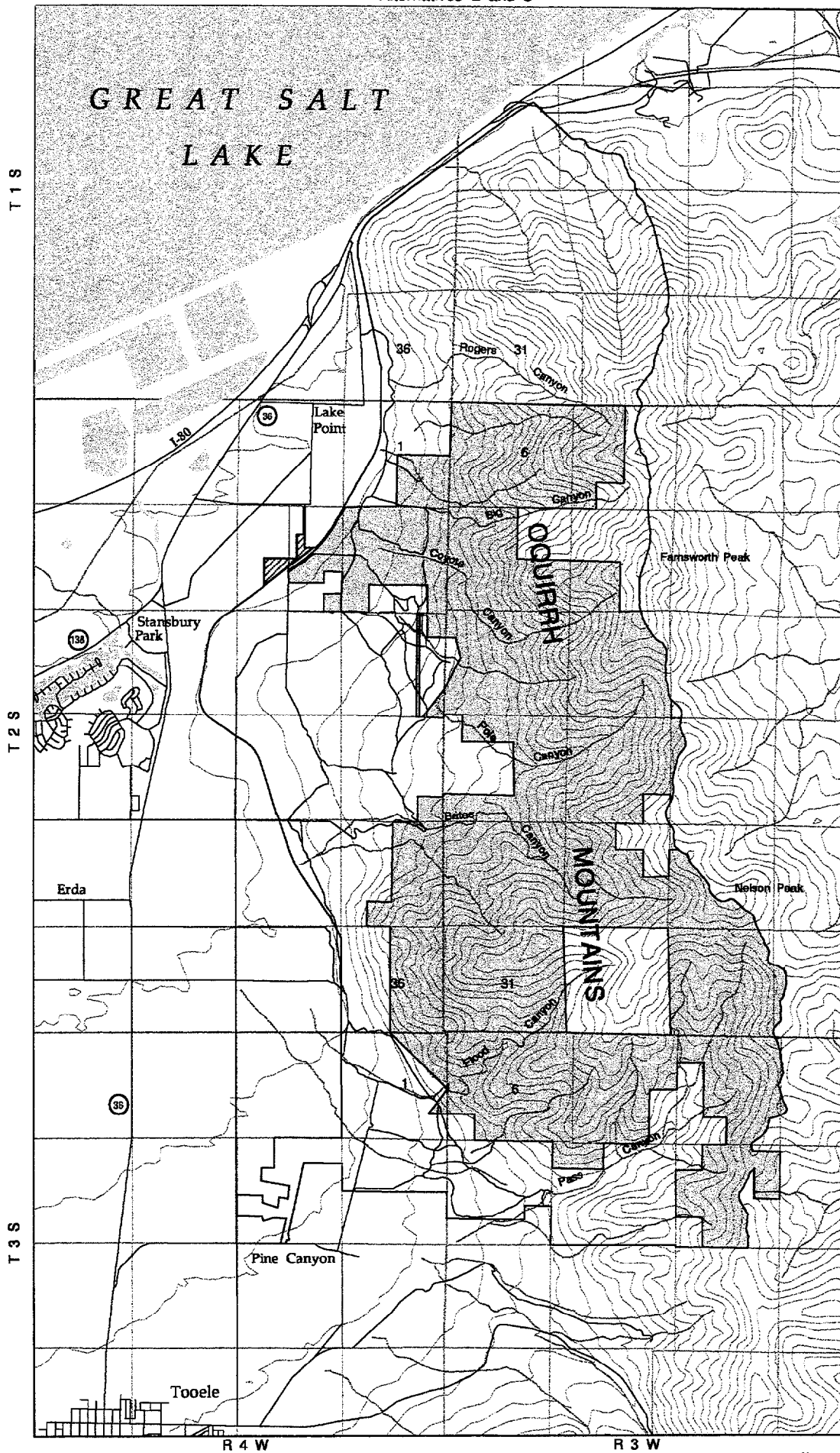
1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000



# MAP 8 MINERAL LEASING CATEGORIES

Alternatives 2 and 3



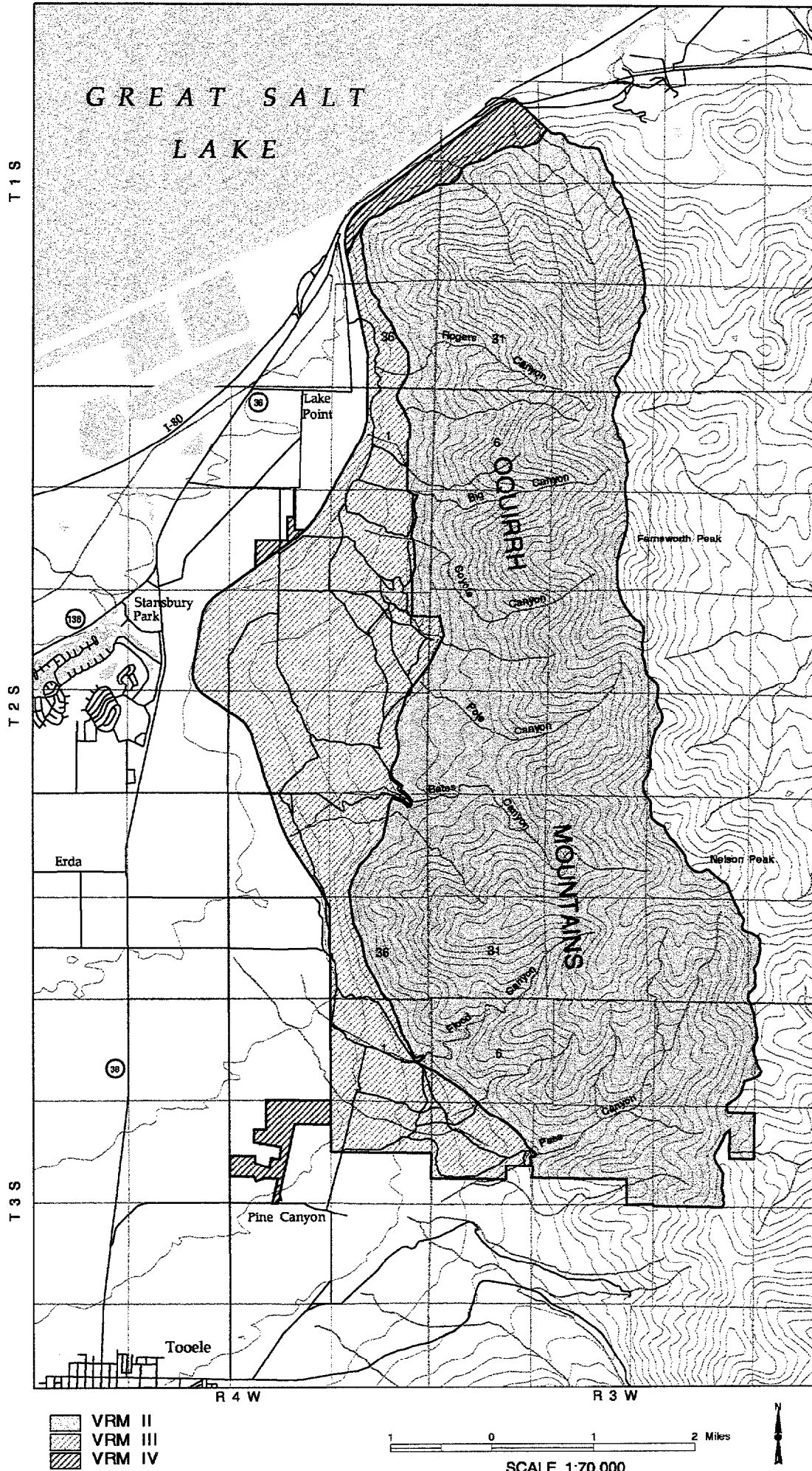
Category 1  
Category 2

1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000



MAP 9 VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
 Alternatives 2 and 3



- VRM II
- VRM III
- VRM IV

1 0 1 2 Miles

SCALE 1:70,000